THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BALLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Advance licences are being issued under the advance licensing scheme in terms of the provisions of the export and Import Policy, The number of licences issued during the year 1992-93, 1993-94 & 1994-95 are as under:—

1992-93	— 21949
1993-94	— 33658
1994-95	— 45983

The details of export obligation fulfilled against these licences which are being actively monitored are as under:

	Licences surrendered/ cancelled	E.O. fulfilled by way of redemption/100% documents submitted	Licences being actively monitored
1992-93	2229	17400	2321
1993-94	3087	24165	6406
1994-95	2983	25329	17671
Total:	8299	66894	26398

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Export Potential of Virginia Tobacco

4003. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tabacoo Board have not paid adequate attention to the export potential of Virginia Tobacco;

(b) whether it is a fact that sufficient incentives have not been given to the exports and manufacturers to try for increased exports of tobacco;

(c) whether a new emphasis will be given for tobacco exports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Some of the steps taken by Tobacco to enhance production, productivity and quality of tobacco as an incentive to enhance exports are:—

(i) Supply of seeds/seedlings of high yielding and disease resistant varieties of FCV/burley tobacco;

(ii) Pest and disease control through fumigation of nurseries;

(iii) encouraging use of sprinkler irrigation system;

(iv) improving curing and storing facilities;

(v) arranging supply of inputs such as coal (for curing) fertilisers and suckercides, and

(vi) training and exposure of farmers to latest research findings.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

Trade Relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh

4004. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to expand trade relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, whether any formal proposals have come from these countries in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any agreements have since been signed between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI

BALLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) It is Government's Policy to expand trade relations with all countries, including neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh.

2. Under the aegis of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA), the Inter Governmental Group on Trade Liberalisation held talks to conclude the Second Round of Trade Negotiations, in which India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other member countries of SAARC participated. Following the negotiations, tariff concessions were exchanged on the basis of request lists of products identified for such concessions, and submitted by individual countries.

3. India granted tariff concessions on 513 tariff lines at 6 big level to Bangladesh, which include inorganic/ organic chemicals, articles of leather, wood, paper/paper board, textiles, footwear etc. at 50% of the applicable customs duty for consumer goods and 25% concession for the rest of the items. India received concessions of 10% of applied tariff on 204 tariff lines at 6 digit level from Bangladesh, which include agricultural products, organic and inorganic chemicals, leather, wood and wood products, paper, metal etc.

4. To Pakistan, India granted tariff concessions in respect of 375 tariff lines at 6 digit level, which include agricultural products, inorganic/organic chemicals, articles of wood, stone, automobile products etc. at a concession of 10% of applied tariff for a majority of items, and 15% for a few tariff lines. India received tariff concession of 10% of the applied tariff in respect of 230 tariff lines at 6 digit level from Pakistan which include vegetable products, inorganic/organic chemicals, plastic & rubber articles, articles of wood, paper base metal, industrial machinery etc.

5. During the 5th meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission held in New Delhi on 10-12 March 1997, agreements were reached on the use of additional routes for both exports and imports viz.

A. Haldibari-Chhilahati,
B. Gojadanga-Burimari,
C. Barsora-Cherragaon,
D. New Jalpaiguri-Tentulia,
E. Jalabazar-Betuli-Fultala.

and examination by a Group of Experts on issues such as points of entry, list of tradeable produce, terms of payments, quantitative limits and customs and immigration modalities.

India Isolated at WTO meet on the issue of Equal Treatment to Multinationals

4005. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India was isolated at the World Trade Organisation Ministerial Meeting in Singapore on the issue of giving equal treatment to multinational companies;

(b) if so, the stand taken by India at the meeting; and

(c) the consensus that emerged from the deliberations of the WTO meet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) At the Singapore Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization, all the developed countries as well as a number of developing countries, actively pursued their proposal of starting an educative process to look at all issues connected with Investment, considering the trade and investment linkage. India took the stand that the WTO need not undertake negotiations to conclude a Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) as Article 9 of the Agreement on Trade Related Investment Measure of the WTO provides for a review for implementation of the Agreement as well as consideration, *Inter-alia*, of investment policy issues by the year 1999. India's concern was fully taken on board and it was decided that a Working Group will be constituted to examine the relationship